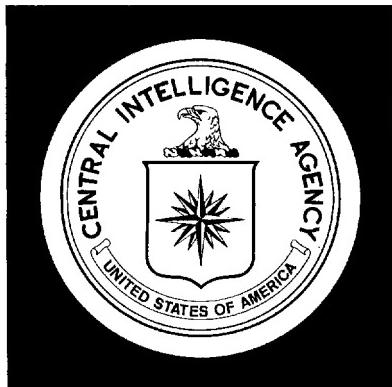


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WEST GERMANY: The government has yet to make a final decision on the issue of whether German forces should be included in the first phase of eventual mutual and balanced force reductions.

Defense Minister Leber told the US ambassador on 16 March that he is convinced Bonn could not accept a reduction of foreign forces stationed in West Germany in an MBFR agreement that did not provide for some type of reduction of indigenous forces. Leber argued that a reduction of stationed forces would create a climate of detente in which the German public would press for cuts in the defense budget, and that German forces would then almost surely have to be reduced. Leber also argued that if the West Germans did not reduce their forces, they would become easy targets for Communist propaganda attacks focusing on alleged German revanchism.

Disarmament Commissioner Roth and other members of the Foreign Office, however, continue to advocate that initial troop reductions be limited to stationed forces. Roth, who arrives today for consultations in Washington, hopes that the US will provide an authoritative statement that it wishes the initial MBFR reductions to be limited to stationed forces. He also hopes that Washington will support the West German - British position that an agreement on constraints be concluded before one on reductions. As envisaged by the Germans and British, a constraints agreement would restrict the size and deployments of forces.

Roth apparently believes that a constraints agreement and possible reductions of indigenous forces in a second stage of MBFR would assuage the Defense Ministry and the German public. The NATO position is that reductions of both stationed and indigenous forces should be carried out in an integrated program, but that reductions of stationed forces would be considered first.

(continued)

* * * *

In Vienna, meanwhile, the US and Dutch delegates have held a series of meetings with their Soviet and Hungarian counterparts in an effort to resolve the question of Hungary's status at the talks. The subject has blocked plenary meetings for more than a month. The Communists reacted very coolly to the current NATO proposal that Hungary's status be left in abeyance. They have not formally turned it down, however, and have been willing to use the informal sessions to search for a "neutral" formulation that would allow the plenaries to resume. [redacted]

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NOTES

GREECE: Student unrest continues despite Prime Minister Papadopoulos' warning a few weeks ago that student protesters would be treated harshly.

[redacted] 2,000 students took over Athens Law School yesterday, after authorities denied them permission to hold an assembly. Police stormed the school and dragged the demonstrators from the building after the students unfurled anti-American banners; 14 students and ten policemen were injured. Unrest is also spreading at other universities, and the whole issue of student discontent, which was originally focused on academic issues, is taking on more and more political significance. [redacted]

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